International Seabed Authority ISBA/21/LTC/14

Legal and Technical Commission

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Selection of candidates for training programmes proposed by UK Seabed Resources Limited and the Federal Institute for Geoscience and Natural Resources of the Federal Republic of Germany

Recommendation by the Legal and Technical Commission

I. Introduction

1. During its meetings in July 2015, the Legal and Technical Commission met to advise the Secretary-General on the selection of candidates for the training programmes proposed by UK Seabed Resources Limited (UKSRL) and the Federal Institute for Geoscience and Natural Resources of the Federal Republic of Germany (BGR), pursuant to their contracts for exploration with the International Seabed Authority.

2. At its first meeting on 6 July 2015, the Commission designated a training subgroup to carry out an initial review and appraisal of the applications and report back to the full Commission. In making its selection of candidates, the subgroup considered the relevant regulations, as well as the principles, policies and procedures applicable to the training programmes, particularly the recommendations for the guidance of contractors and sponsoring States relating to training programmes under plans of work for exploration (ISBA/19/LTC/14).

3. The selection of candidates by the subgroup was based on the qualifications of the candidates proposed by UKSRL and BGR, respectively, particularly with regard to language proficiency, educational background, work experience, potential career development, reasons for seeking training, expected benefit to the candidates' countries, and other merits embodied in the application material. Subject to those considerations, due regard was also paid to equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, in particular, the interests and needs of the landlocked and geographically disadvantaged developing States, as requested by the Council of the International Seabed Authority in its decision adopted at the twentieth session (ISBA/20/C/31, para. 6).

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II. UK Seabed Resources Ltd. Ph.D programmes

4. The Secretary-General of the Authority received a training proposal in April 2015 from UKSRL, which was submitted pursuant to the contract for exploration for polymetallic nodules between the Authority and UKSRL signed on 8 February 2013.[1] According to the proposal, UKSRL had contracted with Plymouth University to provide Ph.D. training opportunities for two trainees from developing States, starting in October 2015. One trainee would receive on-land training in the analysis of polymetallic nodules, using advanced imaging and analysis techniques, while the second would receive training in deep-sea marine biology.

5. The secretariat circulated a note verbale to all members of the Authority on 23 April 2015 inviting them to nominate candidates no later than 20 June 2015. As at 20 June 2015, a total of 39 applications from 15 countries had been received for the Ph.D. programme in analysis of polymetallic nodules, and 42 applications from 16 countries had been received for the Ph.D. programme in marine biology.

6. It was noted that UKSRL had worked closely with Plymouth University and that, furthermore, the University had employed a panel approach in the review of the initial pool of candidates to ensure that the final pool contained only candidates that met the University's own qualification requirements. The outcome of that process was made available to the subgroup and was accepted by the subgroup, given the circumstances and time constraints. However, the subgroup recommended that, in future, the Commission be invited to participate in the process as an observer.

7. The subgroup members each carried out an independent review of the seven recommended candidates for the Ph.D. programme in analysis of polymetallic nodules and the six candidates for the Ph.D. programme in marine biology that had been provided by UKSRL and Plymouth University. The outcome of the independent review by each member of the subgroup was that it was in broad agreement and identified one first-ranked candidate along with an alternate for each Ph.D. programme.

8. The subgroup recommends that the first-ranked candidate be selected for the two available Ph.D. programmes, and in the event that the first-ranked candidate does not accept the training or is unable to take part at short notice, the alternate be offered the opportunity. The subgroup did not consider it necessary to rank further and recommended that, should both the candidates selected for each Ph.D. programme not be available, the Commission be advised and further review undertaken.

9. The subgroup recognized that both first-ranked candidates, given their nationality, current employment and gender, had the opportunity to utilize the benefits of their Ph.D. for the promotion and development of the sustainable use of the resources of the seabed.

[1] PMN/12.3/2013/GBR.

10. The following is recommended:

For the UKSRL Ph.D. programme in analysis of polymetallic nodules:

First-ranked candidate: Wycliff Tupiti (Solomon Islands)

Alternate: Felix Nshimiyimana (Rwanda)

For the UKSRL Ph.D programme in marine biology

First-ranked candidate: Kirsty McQuaid (South Africa)

Alternate: Beatriz Eugenia Mejia Mercado (Mexico)

III. Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of the Federal Republic of Germany at-sea training programmes

11. The Secretary-General also received a training proposal on 10 June 2015 from the BGR, which was submitted pursuant to the contract for exploration for polymetallic sulphides between the Authority and BGR signed on 6 May 2015.[2] According to the BGR training proposal, a total of six training places on board a research vessel will be available for candidates from developing States in 2015 and 2016, as follows: two training places for cruise INDEX2015, scheduled for between October and December 2015; and four training places for cruise INDEX2016, scheduled for between January and February 2016.

12. For each of the six training opportunities, the subgroup acknowledged the excellent programme being offered by BGR, each of which comprises three phases: (a) pre-cruise training; (b) at-sea training; and (c) post-cruise training at BGR.

13. However, the subgroup was of the view that the qualifications criteria of a Bachelor's or Master's degree placed at a disadvantage those candidates whose background and employment was of a technical nature.

14. The secretariat circulated a note verbale to all members of the Authority on 10 June 2015 inviting them to nominate candidates for the BGR training programme no later than 30 June 2015. As at 30 June 2015, a total of 73 applications from 20 countries had been received.

15. The subgroup carried out the selection in a staged process, gradually reducing the number of candidates from 73 to 18. The subgroup then ranked the candidates — 6 preferred and 12 alternates — at the same time ensuring equitable geographic distribution and gender.

16. It is recommended that the 6 top-ranked candidates be invited, in order, to choose between the INDEX2015 Leg 1 cruise, the INDEX2015 Leg 2 cruise, or the INDEX 2016 cruise. Should candidates withdraw, the alternates should be approached in the order ranked.

[2] PMS/05.3/2015/DEU.

17. The final list, as recommended, is as follows:

Name	*Gender*	*Nationality*
First-ranked		
1. Mohamed Hassan	Male	Egypt
2. Chuanshun Li	Male	China
3. Javier Ignacio Peroni	Male	Argentina
4. Unyime Udoudo Umoh	Male	Nigeria
5. Pei San Helen Wong	Female	Singapore
6. Yanina Berbeglia	Female	Argentina
Alternates		
7. Emmanuel Quayson	Male	Ghana
8. Soisa Tanad	Male	Thailand
9. Elizabeth Perez Gonzalez	Female	Mexico
10. Bamidele Oresajo	Male	Nigeria
11. Farid Yuniar	Male	Indonesia
12. Francisco Ponce Nunez	Male	Mexico
13. Miao Yu	Male	China
14. Ibrahim Amadou	Male	Mali
15. Semi Bolalailai	Male	Fiji
16. Christian Kenfack	Male	Cameroon
17. Mohammad Hossain Mahtab	Male	Bangladesh
18. Sathaporn Kavinate	Male	Thailand

18. The Commission, after due consideration of the work carried out by the subgroup, decided to accept its recommendations and agreed to the list of preferred candidates for the UKSRL and BGR training programmes.